

# ANNUAL REPORT



**- CATAWBA -**  
LANDS CONSERVANCY  
LAND | WATER | FARMS | NATURE



**CAROLINA**  
THREAD TRAIL

**JOIN US** AT ONE OF OUR PUBLIC PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

## 2023 N.C. YEAR OF THE TRAIL EVENTS:

**MAY 20**

Hike and Bike Ride at  
Mountain Creek Park

**JUNE 24**

Paddle on the South  
Fork Catawba River

**OCT. 8**

Bike Ride at Little Sugar  
Creek Greenway

**NOV. 4**

Hike at Pharr Family  
Preserve Trail

*Photo by: Nancy Pierce*



**Plus, there's more fun to come for National Trails Day!**  
Mark your calendar for **Saturday, June 3.**





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LANDS CONSERVANCY  
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CAROLINA  
THREAD TRAIL

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

# TRAIL POWER

Economic study shows how trails benefit communities

Tuckasee Park  
Mount Holly, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

### FOR TRAIL USERS AND SUPPORTERS,

it's no secret that access to the outdoors brings many benefits. Better health for users of course, but also positive economic and environmental impacts for communities. Thanks to a recent study about the Carolina Thread Trail network, we can now assign a monetary value to many of these intangibles.

### BENEFITS FOR ECONOMY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

We partnered with Mecklenburg County and the City of Mount Holly to sponsor an economic impact study of six trails within the Thread Trail network, conducted by N.C. State University's Institute of Transportation Research and Education (ITRE). Together, the selected trails total 13 miles of the Thread Trail network and are located in four different counties: Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Gaston and York. The results are impressive, though not at all surprising to anyone familiar with trails.

In examining these six trails, ITRE found each trail supports more than \$3 million in annual business sales and local jobs. The trails are conduits for health and wellness, reducing healthcare costs for users and supporting healthy lifestyles, to the tune of a collective \$3.9 million. Trails provide low-impact transportation options, reducing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and eliminating miles driven in vehicles. The ecosystems protected along trails help to sequester carbon, in addition to providing important habitat for wildlife.

Together, the six trails studied provided more than \$1.5 million in environmental benefits. The study shows the positive economic impact trails are having in communities across our region, benefits that will grow exponentially as the Thread Trail expands.



A&E Riverfront Trail,  
Mount Holly, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

## ECONOMIC, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS FACILITATED

	Total Impact of All Six Study Trails	Average Impact per Trail Mile
Employment	190 jobs	15 jobs
Labor Income	\$9.7 million	\$770,000
Economic Output	\$25.8 million	\$2.1 million
Tax Revenue	\$3.3 million	\$262,000
Healthcare Savings	\$3.9 million	\$310,000
Vehicle Emissions Reduction Benefit	\$90,000	\$7,000
Carbon Storage & Sequestration Benefit	\$1.45 million	\$115,000

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NEWS AND UPDATES.  
[catawbalands.org/latest-news](https://catawbalands.org/latest-news)







Goat Island Park in Cramerton, N.C.

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

## COUNTING TRIPS ON THE TRAIL

We are also gathering data about trail use through anonymous activity counters. These trail counters record each time a person passes by, providing simple numbers on how often a trail is being used. Since late 2021, our staff has installed counters at 24 sites, with more to come. 2022 numbers show over 600,000 trips.

The work to achieve the Thread Trail vision of 1,600 miles of connected trail is ongoing. But these studies make clear that every trail provides a lasting impact for the local community and the world.

## 6 TRAILS INCLUDED IN THE ITRE STUDY

- Four Mile Creek Greenway (Matthews, N.C.)
- Piedmont Medical Center Trail (Rock Hill, S.C.)
- Hector H. Henry II Greenway (Concord, N.C.)
- South Fork Trail (McAdenville, N.C.)
- Mount Holly River Hawk Greenway (Mount Holly, N.C.)
- The Goat Island Park and River Link Greenway (Cramerton, N.C.)

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMING TOGETHER

Last year brought about meaningful changes for us at Catawba Lands Conservancy and Carolina Thread Trail. Our growing staff relocated to a new office space, and leadership from the two organizations worked through the process of a merger. As of Jan. 1, 2023, the Conservancy and Thread Trail became one 501(c)3 nonprofit.

We have always worked closely and shared resources to achieve our parallel missions, and that won't change. Both our conservation efforts and trail network are invaluable, and will continue. As one united organization, we can operate more efficiently and effectively to move the needle on both fronts.

As I contemplate where we go from here, I am heartened by the show of support I see for the quality of life of our region. Last year saw the largest investments ever in North Carolina's conservation funds, and significant increases to state funding for trail projects. In 2023, North Carolina is celebrating the Year of the Trail, designated by the state's legislature to highlight its incredible trail resources. Through it all, I feel thankful for the support that you have shown here at home for your local land trust and trail network.

Thank you for helping us save land and connect lives to nature.

**BART LANDESS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR







Photo by: Nancy Pierce

# NEW PROPERTY ACQUISITION

## ADVANCING FORNEY CREEK RESTORATION

An impaired stream in Lincoln County is one big step closer to being restored, with an acquisition that provides protection on both sides of the stream. The two-acre Forney Creek Addition includes the streambank opposite our Saint James Preserve in Lincoln County, N.C.

The EPA lists Forney Creek as an Impaired stream, but we hope to change that.

**“A stream restoration would improve water quality, creating a healthier ecosystem where frogs, turtles and macroinvertebrates all thrive.”**

— Sean Bloom, GIS Director and Staff Biologist

We have completed the design for a first phase of restoration and are currently seeking grant funding for engineering and construction work.

“This newest addition is very exciting because it brings us closer to implementing our larger vision to restore the stream,” said Amanda Byrum, Land Conservation Director for the Conservancy.

The Forney Creek Addition, made possible by a \$20,000 support grant from the Catawba Wateree Water Management Group, adds to 471 acres already conserved near Denver, N.C.

# WELCOME NEW STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS!



**AGATHA BELVIN**  
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**JENNY MOORE**  
Development  
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AND MICHAEL LUCENTE, Board Member, Strategy and Transactions Partner, Ernst and Young





# FIELD NOTES

## NATIVE WILDLIFE THRIVES ON PROTECTED PROPERTIES

The Conservancy's stewardship team placed game cameras at several conserved properties over the last year. Photos like the one above show an incredible diversity of animals, including a bobcat, wild turkeys, hawks, coyotes, white-tailed deer and more.

## EXCEEDED MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGES

Thank you to everyone who donated during our Giving Tuesday and end-of-year matching campaigns. With your support, we exceeded both matches and doubled the funds available to save land and connect lives to nature.

Thank you to Bragg Financial and our Board of Directors for putting forward those matching gifts.



## TRAIL FORUM SELLS OUT

The Thread Trail's 15th annual Trail Forum conference, presented by LandDesign, sold out for the first time ever in December. Three hundred people attended the event, which featured a keynote presentation from nationally renowned speaker and founder of Equitable Cities Charles T. Brown. He spoke on the importance of equity in transportation and planning work and the historic inequities within those spaces.

**LandDesign.**  
CREATING PLACES  
THAT MATTER.



Photo by: Nancy Pierce

# 2022 BY THE NUMBERS

**600,000+**

TRIPS RECORDED BY  
TRAIL COUNTERS



**13**



MILES OF NEW  
TRAIL OPENED



SOLD-OUT  
TRAIL FORUM



VOLUNTEER  
WORKDAYS

**260**



VOLUNTEERS





## 2023 IS N.C.'S YEAR OF THE TRAIL!

We were thrilled to kick off 2023 N.C. Year of the Trail with a special reception and launch party at our annual educational conference, Trail Forum. Attendees heard from Reid Wilson, Secretary of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources; State Representatives Dean Arp (Union County) and Hugh Blackwell (Burke County); Commissioner Elaine Powell (Mecklenburg County) and other supporters of trails.

Year of the Trail is the largest statewide celebration of trails and outdoor recreation in North Carolina history. Check out the Year of Trail events we're hosting on the back cover.



N.C. Representative Dean Arp

Photo by: Nancy Pierce

## NEW KAYAK LAUNCH AT SPENCER MOUNTAIN (SOUTH FORK RIVER)

There is a brand-new steel launch at the Spencer Mountain River Access in Gaston County, N.C. After years of use, the previous wooden launch needed to be replaced. One of the few public launches on the South Fork River, it provides access to a scenic stretch of river surrounded by 1,300 acres of conserved land and historic points of interest.

Special thanks to the Gaston Community Foundation, Gaston County Tourism Development and our Greenway Gals affiliate group for helping to fund this important project.

## RALPH DELL AWARDED VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Our 2022 Saxby Chaplin Volunteer of the Year award was given out during Trail Forum to Ralph Dell.

Ralph (pictured center) donated over 250 volunteer hours with us. He led his own group of volunteers in regular invasive plant removal at Forney Creek Trail in Denver, N.C. In addition to volunteering with our organization, he serves on the Board of Directors of Keep Catawba County Beautiful. Ralph's community-minded attitude and dedication truly embody the spirit of this award's namesake.



Photo by: Nancy Pierce







# 2022 CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY AND CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL DONORS

Our donors' generous support each year enables us to pursue our mission of saving land and connecting lives to nature. This list reflects combined gifts to both organizations that were made during the 2022 calendar year.

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Bryan Huffstetler  
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Emily Huling  
Karen Humphrey  
Andrew Huneycutt  
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**Cheryl Johnson\***  
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Michaela Karutz  
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Launa and Allen Kendle  
Joan Kilian  
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Gerry Kingsley  
Eric Kjellberg  
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Ashton Lamb  
Dan Lantz  
Stacy Leff  
**Louis and Tamara Lesesne\***  
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Paul Liles  
John Linster  
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Gail Olsen  
Judy Osborn  
Todd Overpeck  
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Gail L. Thomas  
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Murphy

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Diane Watson  
Tom Watson  
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Mark White  
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Diane Willis  
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Marika Deppmeyer  
Nadine Dixon  
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Jennifer Murdock

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Martha and Tommy Odom

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Walter and Christi Pringle

Dr. James and Mrs. Faye Pugh

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Dorothy Sangmuah

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Hugh Sproul

Tex and Grace Squires

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Douglas Baldi  
Amy Barker  
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Bob and Wanda Burton  
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Regina Friedman  
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Cory Hovde Paule  
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Olivia Hughes  
Katie Johnson  
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**B.J. and Emily Jones\***  
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Julia Wiggins

Tracy Wilson

Donna Winston

Allison and Zachary Woelfel

Caryn Wright

Nancy Yudell

Janet Zick

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Bernie Ackerman,  
honored by Mary Ann Pires  
Suzy Hannon,  
honored by Robert Blanton  
Kathryn Heath, honored by Lloyd  
and Margaret Rash Family  
Advised Fund  
Eric Hovey, honored by Payden  
& Rygel  
Andy Kane, honored by Mike  
& Lisa North and Lauren  
Sawyers  
Kaye McMullen, honored by  
Edward  
and Leslie Jenkins  
Laura Meier, honored by Elaine  
Powell  
Tom Okel, honored by  
The Bunn Family Foundation  
Frank Rankin,  
honored by Uwharrie Bank  
Steve Regele, honored by  
William Dealy and Michael  
Geis  
Dana and Robert Servatius,  
honored by William James  
Craemer  
Mark Stanback, honored by Meg  
Seifert  
Robert Voelker, honored by  
Warren and Camille English

## MEMORIALS

In Memory of Joyce Baldwin by  
Mollie Trosper  
In Memory of Barbara and John  
Bass by Irene Robertson  
In Memory of Kay Carr by Susan  
C. Carr  
In Memory of John Eddleman by  
Myra Taylor

In Memory of Bete and Gertrude  
Gallant by Carol Gallant  
In Memory of Buck Mason by  
Danny and Sandy Bradford  
In Memory of Larry Mellichamp by  
Audrey Mellichamp  
In Memory of Hannah Miller by  
Barbara S. Lake  
In Memory of Edward Wallace  
by Joyce Burt and Danny C.  
Wallace  
In Memory of Charles Warren  
Jones by Dale Coulthard  
In Memory of Craig Wyant by Craig  
R. Wyant Memorial Group

## CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, AND GOVERNMENT

### \$100,000

Bank of America  
The Dowd Foundation  
Wells Fargo  
David Belk Cannon Foundation

### \$50,000

Broyhill Family Foundation

### \$25,000

Bragg Financial Advisors, Inc.  
Dickson Foundation, Inc.  
OrthoCarolina  
Pharr Yarns  
The Stowe Foundation

### \$10,000

Abacus Capital USA  
Akers Foundation  
Ally Financial  
Blythe Development Company  
Choate Construction  
Kulynych Family Foundation  
Marsh Properties  
Regions Bank  
REI  
Rock Hill Coca-Cola Bottling  
Company  
The Allen Tate Foundation  
The Hayes Foundation

### \$5,000

American Farmland Trust  
Blum, Inc.  
Brown Brothers Harriman & Co.  
Crescent Communities  
Fig Tree Fund  
Friendship Fund Foundation  
Gaston Community Foundation  
LandDesign  
Lanier Material Sales  
Lanier Material Sales  
Neill Grading and Construction  
Payden & Rygel  
SteelFab, Inc.  
The Cannon Foundation  
The Howe Foundation

### \$2,500

Appian Group, LLC  
Arborguard Tree Specialists  
BGE, Inc.  
CBRE  
Collier Law, PLLC.  
Colonial Materials, Inc.  
ECS Southeast, LLP  
Global Endowment Management  
Foundation  
Little  
McKim & Creed Inc.





Moore & Van Allen, PLLC  
Sides Erosion Control Services, Inc.  
Southeastern  
Architectural Systems  
Warco Construction  
Wildlands Engineering, Inc.

#### \$1,000

Alta Planning + Design  
Blue Ridge Trail Works, Inc.  
Boardroom Insiders  
Brasfield & Gorrie  
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft  
LLP  
Claude and Raenelle Abernethy  
Charitable Trust  
ESP Associates  
Frontier Growth  
Great Outdoor Provision Co.  
GreerWalker, LLP  
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.  
Lat Purser & Associates, Inc.  
McLeod Corporation Holiday  
Marina  
Nealon Planning  
Pepsi-Cola Hickory  
The Keith Corporation  
The Shaw Tate Group  
Truist Financial Corporation  
Wild Hope Farm LLC

#### \$500

Benesch  
Bolton & Menk  
Charlotte Woman's Club  
Destination by Design Planning,  
LLC  
Dewberry  
Kavanagh  
Southwood Corporation  
Spangler Environmental, Inc.  
Stewart  
Tindol Subaru  
West Monroe Partners  
Women's Impact Fund

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Blue Blaze Brewery  
Daughters of the American  
Revolution  
Davidson Garden Club  
Garden Club of Weddington  
Kings Mountain Gateway Trails,  
Inc.  
Nisbet Oil Company  
Wirth Associates, Inc.

## CONSERVATION EASEMENTS & LAND DONATIONS

City of Charlotte  
Leslie Freeman  
Susan Howie

## LAND ACQUISITION FUND

Anonymous  
Huber Corporation  
Irene Robertson  
Kathryn Heath and Tom Webb  
NC Department of Natural &  
Cultural Resources  
North Carolina Land and Water  
Fund

## IN-KIND

Civil & Environmental  
Consultants, Inc.  
McLean Homes  
Nancy Pierce Photography  
REI  
Starlight on 22nd  
Yellow Duck Marketing

## CTT CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

#### \$1,000,000+

David Belk Cannon Foundation

#### \$500,000+

Bank of America  
C.D. Spangler Foundation  
Charlotte Mecklenburg  
Community Foundation  
The Dowd Foundation  
Duke Energy Foundation  
Wells Fargo Foundation

#### \$250,000+

Sarah and Tim Belk  
The Cannon Foundation  
The Carstarphen Family  
Comporium  
Dickson Foundation, Inc.  
W. Duke Kimbrell Family  
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The Leon Levine Foundation  
**Lat and Kathy Purser\***

#### \$100,000+

Bill and Sharon Allen  
Blumenthal Foundation  
Blythe Brothers Foundation  
Broyhill Family Foundation  
Freestone Family Fund  
The George Foundation  
Honeywell  
Eugene and Vickie Johnson  
Dave and Julia Priestler  
Rotary Club of Hickory  
Ruth Samuelson Legacy Gift  
Shovelin Family Fund  
Edward Weisiger, Jr.  
and Betsy Fleming

#### \$50,000+

Teri and Bernie Ackerman  
Arras Foundation  
Choate Construction Company  
Walter and Delane Clark  
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The Craze Family  
Donna and Alvaro de Molina  
Faison  
Karen Fox Family Fund  
Tom Webb and Kathryn Heath  
Susie and George Henry III  
Karen Fox Family Fund  
Kelly Katterhagen and Larry  
Nabatoff  
Jamie and Hunter McLawhorn  
Greg and Jill Parsons  
Rock Hill Coca-Cola Bottling  
Company  
Southwire  
The Stowe Foundation  
The Allen Tate Foundation  
Gary and Peggy Williams

#### \$25,000+

Anonymous  
Claudia and Andy Heath  
David Looper Family  
Dreams Afloat Foundation  
John McGill  
Kulynych Family Foundation  
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Lynn and Leroy Lail  
Parker and Stephen Shuford  
Foundation  
Ruth and Colin Shaw  
The Howe Foundation  
The Truist Foundation

#### \$10,000+

Beacon Partners Fund  
Beth and Ken Beuley  
Blum, Inc.  
Paul and Margaret Campbell  
The Springsteen Foundation  
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Rick and Vikki DeSoto  
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Ralph Falls Family  
Nancy Falls  
Grubb Family Fund  
Dehler and Alice Hart  
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United Bank  
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#### \$5,000+

Claude and Raenelle Abernethy  
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Tim and Cindy Kelly  
Jim and Lynn Lawton  
Chad McGowan  
Meg Nealon and Brad Lail  
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#### UP TO \$4,999

Anonymous  
Tammy and Kelvin Anderson  
Travis and Lisa Anderson  
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Edward S. and Kimberly G. Booher  
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CBRE  
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Daniel Litaker  
J. Wriley and Paige McKeown  
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Holt and Anne Morrison  
Sally and Lane Ormand  
Pepsi-Cola Company  
Ben and Porter Peterson  
Henry Pharr  
Kathy Pilkington  
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Richard and Donna Richter  
Ken Riddick  
James and Susan Sanders  
Valerie Scott  
Patrick and Katherine Shaw  
Brad and Texie Shelby  
The Smith Westmoreland Family  
Fund  
Rob and Glenda Steel  
James Stines  
James and Jacqueline Stramm  
Troutman Sanders LLP  
Tom Watson  
Andy and Suzanne Wells  
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Williamson  
Reese M. Wilson  
Pamela Zamora





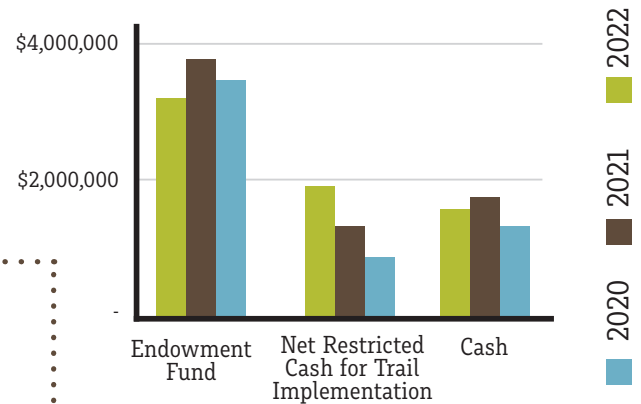
# CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL FINANCIAL REPORT

*In 2022, new grants to local communities for trail implementation awarded was about \$870,000*

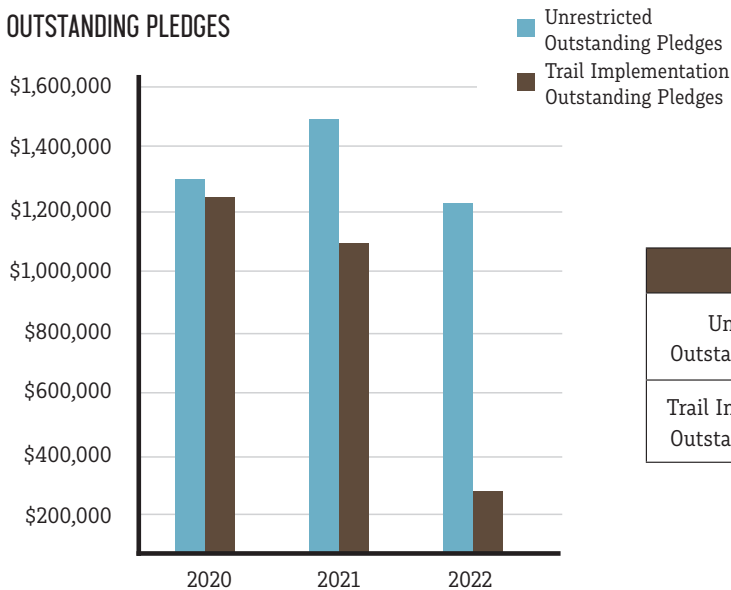
## CASH RESTRICTED AND OPERATING, UNAUDITED

	2020	2021	2022
Operating Cash	\$1,360,000	\$1,797,000	\$1,602,881
Net Restricted Cash for Trail Implementation	\$915,000	\$1,370,000	\$1,883,344
Endowment Fund	\$3,424,000	\$3,838,000	\$3,253,592

## CASH RESTRICTED AND OPERATING, UNAUDITED



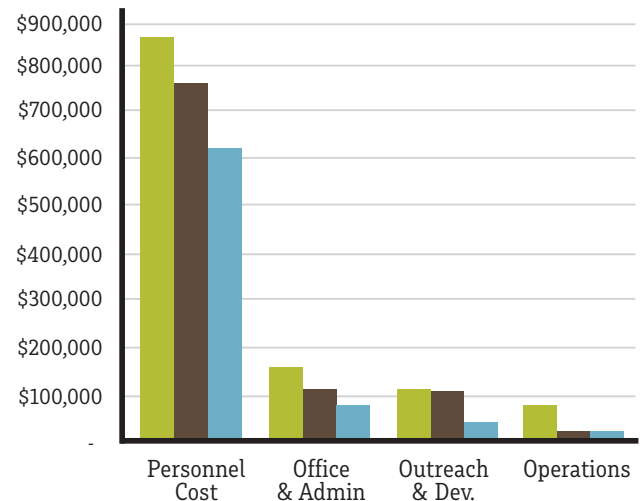
## OUTSTANDING PLEDGES



ASSETS	2020	2021	2022
Unrestricted Outstanding Pledges	\$1,327,000	\$1,494,000	\$1,223,000
Trail Implementation Outstanding Pledges	\$1,247,000	\$1,091,000	\$262,000

## OPERATING EXPENSES

	2020	2021	2022
Personnel Cost	\$613,000	\$773,000	\$868,000
Office and Admin	\$89,000	\$112,000	\$161,000
Outreach & Development	\$46,000	\$108,000	\$111,000
Operations	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$83,000



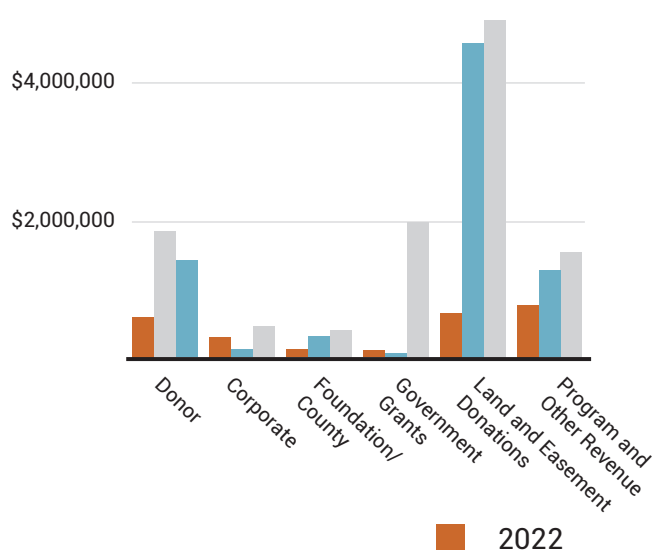


# CATAWBA LANDS CONSERVANCY FINANCIAL REPORT

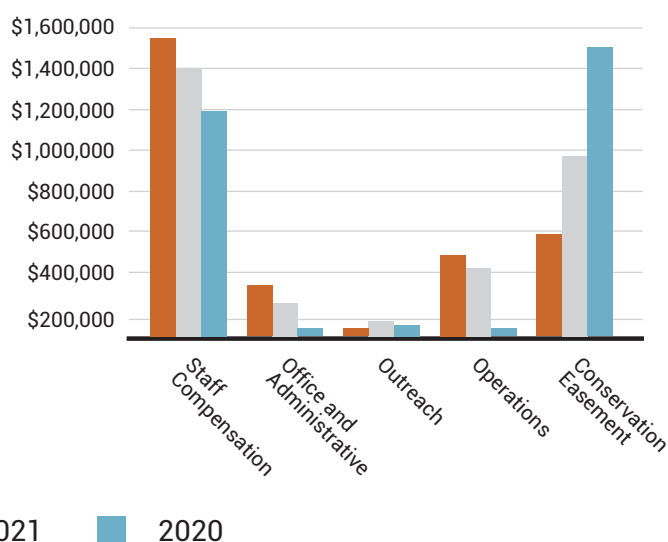
In 2022, Catawba Lands Conservancy acquired approximately 60 acres in donated conservation easements. Note: The three-year revenue and expense report is both restricted and unrestricted revenue.

In 2022 the downturn in the cash balance for Stewardship and Legal Defense Funds, shows unrealized losses due to market conditions.

## THREE-YEAR SUPPORT AND REVENUE



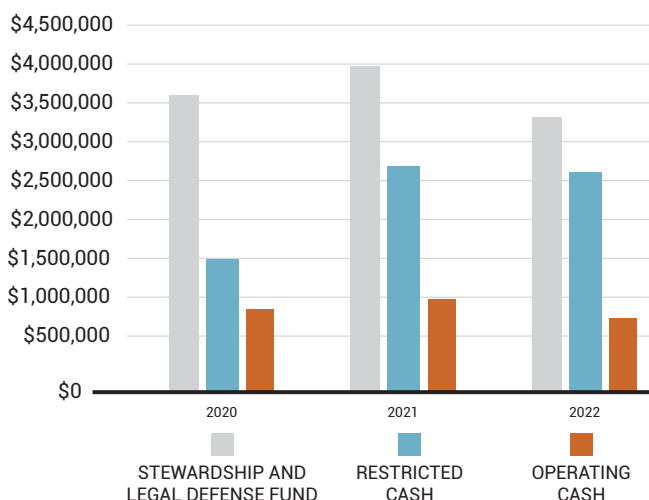
## THREE-YEAR EXPENSES



## OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY 2020-2022 GENERAL FUND

		2020	2021	2022
REVENUE	Donors	\$1,412,445	\$1,840,687	\$642,778
	Corporate	\$370,791	\$115,785	\$282,511
	Foundations and Government	\$259,645	\$233,608	\$115,456
	Government Grants	\$1,989,146	\$44,450	\$113,293
	Land and Easement Donations	\$4,742,066	\$4,669,300	\$979,875
	Program and Other Revenue	\$1,511,969	\$1,308,503	\$903,917
	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,286,062</b>	<b>\$8,212,333</b>	<b>\$3,037,830</b>
EXPENSES	Compensation	\$1,216,768	\$1,397,176	\$1,561,038
	Office and Administrative	\$104,440	\$256,086	\$356,078
	Outreach and Development	\$109,562	\$190,097	\$162,042
	Operations	\$77,098	\$416,083	\$494,007
	Conservation Easements	\$1,521,500	\$579,050	\$979,875
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,029,368</b>	<b>\$2,838,492</b>	<b>\$3,553,040</b>
<b>Operating Net</b>		<b>\$7,256,694</b>	<b>\$5,373,841</b>	<b>\$515,210</b>

## CASH BALANCES



	2020	2021	2022
Stewardship and Legal Defense	\$3,539,698	\$3,975,060	\$3,321,164
Restricted Cash	\$1,506,621	\$2,687,355	\$2,621,470
Operating Cash	\$879,194	\$984,346	\$747,803





## STAFF

**Danielle Andrews**  
Land Conservation Associate

**Bret Baronak**  
Carolina Thread Trail Director

**Agatha Belvin**  
Accounting and Administrative Manager

**Sean Bloom**  
GIS Director and Biologist

**Brittnay Brown**  
Land Conservation and Trail Projects Coordinator

**Amanda Byrum**  
Land Conservation Director

**Eric Calloway**  
Development Associate

**Jennifer Clark**  
Senior Communications and Marketing Manager

**Becca Cohler**  
Trail and Volunteer Manager

**Alesia Dicosola**  
Associate Director of Development and Marketing

**Mark Kincaid**  
Carolina Thread Trail Community Coordinator

**Ashton Lamb**  
Carolina Thread Trail Community Coordinator

**Bart Landess**  
Executive Director

**Jane Love**  
Carolina Thread Trail Community Coordinator

**Jenny Moore**  
Development Manager

**Gail Olsen**  
Finance Director

**Jessica Otto**  
Director of Development and Marketing

**Will Ruark**  
Conservation Preserve Manager

**Sharon Wilson**  
Land Stewardship Director

**Blair Boggs**  
President, LINE-X

**Len Botkin**  
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